

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

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FM AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2336

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LOURENCO MARQUES 0080

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, MOPS, MZ

SUBJECT: VISIT TO MOZAMBIQUE OF PORTUGUESE CHIEF OF STAFF
GENERAL COSTA GOMES

REF: (A) LOURENCO MARQUES 037; (B) LOURENCO MARQUES 044

1. GENERAL COSTA GOMES, CHIEF OF STAFF, PORTUGUESE ARMED FORCES, LEFT FROM BEIRA FEBRUARY 1 AFTER TWO WEEK VISIT IN MOZAMBIQUE. IN HIS FAREWELL ADDRESS AT AIRPORT GENERAL COSTA GOMES REFERRED TO EXPANSION OF "SUBVERSION" INTO BEIRA AND VILA PEREIRA DISTRICTS, AND SAID "WE ARE FACING DIFFICULT, BUT IN NO MANNER ALARMING SITUATION", WHICH MUST BE ENCOUNTERED WITH "CALMNESS, CONSIDERATION, AND FIRMNESS" AVOIDING "UNCONTROLLED" ATTITUDES WHICH NEITHER BENEFIT ANYONE NOR LEAD TO SOLUTION. HE SAID SUBVERSION MUST BE FOUGHT WITH COOPERATION OF CIVILIAN AUTHORITIES, MILITARY FORCES AND ENTIRE POPULACE WITHOUT DISTINCTION OF COLOR OR CREED. HE SAID HE WAS ABLE TO BRING ABOUT MEASURES LEADING
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TO BETTER COOPERATION OF FORCES TO REDUCE THREAT OF VIOLENT

SUBVERSION AND THAT WITH "GOODWILL, FAITH, PERSISTANCE, AND DETERMINATION" ORDER WOULD BE RE-ESTABLISHED BRINGING BACK TO MOZAMBIQUE CONDITIONS WHICH ALLOW ALL PORTUGUESE BASED THERE TO "LIVE AND PROGRESS IN THE ATMOSPHERE OF PEACE AND JUSTICE WHICH ALL COVET".

2. ON ARRIVAL JANUARY 18 GENERAL GOMES MET WITH AND RECEIVED PETITIONS FROM VARIOUS GROUPS IN VILA PERY-BEIRA AREA. DURING NEXT TEN DAYS HE VISITED MILITARY INSTALLATIONS, HOSPITALS AND TOWNS IN THREE MAIN AREAS OF GUERRILLA ACTION, AND ENDED HIS JOURNEY IN LOURENCO MARQUES WHERE GOVERNOR GENERAL PIMENTEL DOS SANTOS GAVE IN-HOUSE DINNER IN HIS HONOR.

3. COMMENT: GENERAL GOMES' VISIT HAD REPORTEDLY BEEN PLANNED FOR SOME TIME BUT FORTUITOISLY TOOK PLACE RIGHT AFTER ATTACK ON FARM HOUSE NEAR VILA DE MANICA REPORTED REF A WHICH HAD SUCH STRONG REPERCUSSIONS IN VILA PERY-BEIRA AREA - THUS GIVING RISE TO RUMOR HE HAD BEEN SENT ON SPECIAL MISSION BY PRIME MINISTER CAETANO. WHILE JITTERY POPULACE IN BEIRA MADE THE MOST OF HIS PRESENCE AS A MEANS OF GETTING THEIR CONCERN BACK TO LISBON, ENTHUSIASM IN REST OF COUNTRY WAS ANYTHING BUT MARKED. ENTIRE VISIT WAS CARRIED OUT IN LOW-KEY WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES HOLDING CEREMONIES AND PUBLICITY TO MINIMUM REQUIRED BY NORMS OF COURTESY FOR PRESENCE OF SUCH HIGH RANKING OFFICIAL. APPARENTLY GENERAL GOMES' PERIOD OF SERVICE IN MOZAMBIQUE WHICH ENDED FIVE YEARS AGO IS NOT REMEMBERED VERY FAVORABLY, AND THERE IS CONSIDERABLE SKEPTICISM OVER WHETHER THIS MOST RECENT VISIT WILL ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING.
VAN OSS

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